

Docket 04-233

I am writing concerning Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air a misleading and dishonest anti-Kerry documentary days before the election. This is a gross misuse of Sinclair's privileged access to the public airwaves, as it clearly does not serve the public interest. Moreover, such abuse by Sinclair is harmful to our democracy.

I have attempted to contact my local Sinclair station, WGGB ABC 40 in Springfield, Massachusetts to voice my opinion. However, the station would not record my opinion, but rather they switched my call to a recorded message, which informed me that I must call the Sinclair Corporate Office to voice my opinion. This is outrageous! Not only is my local station not serving the public interest, but they also refuse to recognize the opinions of their viewing public!

This situation provides a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. It is vital that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter rather than something produced for political purposes in a corporation headquarters far away.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard.

Thank you.